

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 NIC-01

SAJ-01 NEA-09 /068 W

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R 091810Z APR 75

FM AMEBASSY BERLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0652

INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 5515

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GE, SHUM

SUBJECT: CLAIMS AGAINST THE GDR: JEWISH MATERIAL CLAIMS

REF: BERLIN 5447

1. DURING VISIT OF SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS CODEL TO BERLIN OVER WEEK END OF MARCH 31 BOTH SENATORS HUMPHREY AND HUGH SCOTT TALKED WITH DR. GEYER, SECTION LEADER IN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ABOUT JEWISH CLAIMS. OCCASION FOR THESE TALKS WAS AMBASSADOR'S LUNCH AT HIS HOME IN EAST BERLIN ON AFTERNOON OF MARCH 31.

2. SENATOR HUMPHREY RAISED THE SUBJECT OF JEWISH CLAIMS WITH GEYER IN CONTEXT OF INFORMAL CONVERSATION INCLUDING OTHER MATTERS. SENATOR NOTED THAT THERE WAS GREAT POLITICAL INTEREST IN THE U.S. IN SEEING THAT JEWISH CLAIMS WERE HANDLED EXPEDITIOUSLY AND FAIRLY BY GDR AUTHORITIES. IN MAKING INITIAL PRESENTATION SENATOR USED WORD "REPARATIONS" WHICH GEYER SEIZED UPON TO INDICATE THAT GDR HAD MET ALL OF "REPARATION" CLAIMS WHICH HAD BEEN DECIDED AT POTSDAM CONFERENCE THROUGH PAYMENTS TO THE SOVIET UNION. THE CONVERSATION WAS THEN PUT BACK ON THE

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TRACK BY THE STATEMENT THAT WHAT WAS AT ISSUE WAS MATTER

OF CLAIMS RATHER THAN "REPARATIONS" AND REFERENCE WAS MADE TO THE RECENT ARTICLE IN DIE WELT (REFTEL) IN WHICH DR. GOLDMAN WAS REPORTED TO HAVE STATED THAT HIS CONTACT WITH FIRST SECRETARY HONECKER HAD NOT TAKEN PLACE. GEYER INDICATED THAT HE WAS FAMILIAR WITH THE ARTICLE AND THAT IT WAS HIS UNDERSTANDING THAT TALKS ABOUT CLAIMS MIGHT TAKE PLACE AS EARLY AS THE "AUTUMN". GEYER THEN STATED THAT WITH REGARD TO HONECKER'S SEEING DR. GOLDMAN SUCH A POSSIBILITY WAS UNDER "THREE LAYERS OF COVERING". DR. GEYER THEN VOLUNTEERED THAT HE UNDERSTOOD THE PROBLEM IN THE U.S. ABOUT CLAIMS AND THAT, PARTICULARLY IN A "POLITICAL CAMPAIGN", SENATOR HUMPHREY WOULD BE UNDER SOME PRESSURE TO BE ABLE TO RESPOND ON THIS SUBJECT. HUMPHREY POINTED OUT THAT THE SUBJECT WAS NOT JUST A QUESTION OF "A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN" BUT THAT PRESSURE FOR PROGRESS ON THIS PARTICULAR SUBJECT WAS CONSTANT IN THE U.S. SENATOR HUMPHREY REPEATED THE IMPORTANCE WHICH IS ATTACHED TO THIS SUBJECT AS A MATTER OF MORALITY. DR. GEYER AGREED THAT THE SUBJECT WAS MORAL RATHER THAN LEGAL.

4. SENATOR SCOTT'S CONVERSATION WITH GEYER WAS SHORTER AND NO EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVE WAS A PARTICIPANT. IT TOO TOOK PLACE IN THE INFORMAL CIRCUMSTANCES DESCRIBED ABOVE. SENATOR SCOTT LATER DESCRIBED HIS CONVERSATION BY SAYING THAT GEYER HAD BEEN "DEFENSIVE" ON THE SUBJECT OF JEWISH CLAIMS.

5. COMMENT: DR. GEYER DID NOT SEEM TO BE PARTICULARLY PREPARED FOR THE SUBJECT AND TOOK AN EASY DIVERSION ON THE SUBJECT OF "REPARATIONS" IN THE INITIAL PART OF HIS TALK WITH SENATOR HUMPHREY. SENATOR HUMPHREY, HOWEVER, WAS INSISTENT AND MANAGED TO GET HIS OWN PERSONAL INTEREST AS WELL AS THE BROADER POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF A JUST SETTLEMENT OF THESE CLAIMS FOR PEOPLE IN THE US ACROSS TO DR. GEYER. GEYER'S REFERENCE TO BILATERAL DISCUSSION OF CLAIMS IN THE FALL MAY, HOWEVER, BE A REFERENCE TO THE SETTLEMENT OF MATERIAL CLAIMS OTHER THAN JEWISH CLAIMS WHICH WERE FORESEEN IN THE NEGOTIATIONS IN JULY 1974 REGARDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC

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RELATIONS. GROVE

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Message Attributes

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